DOCUMENT RESUME

ED 355 740 EC 301 997

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TITLE	Communication Unbound: How Facilitated Communication Is Challenging Traditional Views of Autism and Ability/Disability. Special Education Series #13.
REPORT NO	ISBN-0-8077-3221-4
PUB DATE	93
NOTE	221p.
AVAILABLE FROM	Teachers College Press, Columbia University, 1234 Amsterdam Ave., New York, NY 10027 (paperback: ISBN-0-8077-3221-4, $17.95; clothbound: ISBN-0-8077-3222-2, $39).
PUB TYPE	Reports - Descriptive (141) -- Guides - Non-Classroom Use (055) -- Books (010)
EDRS PRICE	Document Not Available from EDRS.
DESCRIPTORS	*Autism; *Communication Aids (for Disabled); *Communication Disorders; Communication Skills; Educational Philosophy; Interpersonal Communication; *Intervention; Personal Autonomy; Training Methods; Typewriting; Validity
IDENTIFIERS	*Facilitated Communication

ABSTRACT

This book introduces "facilitated communication," a method of assisting people with autism tc communicate by means of physical assistance in typewriting. The boo: is organized as a kind of a story around the author's own experience using the facilitated communication method, with examples of fieldwork using qualitative research to illustrate particular points and principles. The book begins with the account of his introduction to the method in Australia and then goes on to describe additional experiences with facilitated communication in various places. The third chapter considers use of the method with individuals with highly disordered speech. Chapter 4 offers accounts of parents and teachers who discovered facilitated communication on their own. Chapter 5 focuses on the controversy over the method, including issues of validity, the social meaning of disability, the power of prevailing paradigms, and the difficulties of change. Chapter 6 examines the messages of these individuals including their "not wanting autism" and the meaning of difficult behavior. In the final chapter the place of facilitated communication in understanding ability and disability is considered. An appendix contains training materials. (Contains 112 references.) (DB)

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